

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BRUSSE 15653 141748Z
ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 /021 W
-----089665 150319Z /14

R 141728Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8337
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL ANTWERP

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 15653

FOR CRS/ALP/ITA/BDNEUHARD AND OCA/EB/AZUCCA
VIENNA PASS SALZBURG

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGS: BEXP, BE
SUBJECT: WESTERN EUROPE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICER
CONFERENCES

REF: STATE 202171

1) REFTEL PROPOSED THAT KAUFMAN AND KELLER FROM EMBASSY
BRUSSELS ATTEND E/C OFFICER CONFERENCE IN SALZBURG.
EMBASSY CONFIRMS ATTENDANCE OF KAUFMAN AND KELLER FOR THIS
CONFERENCE; HOWEVER KAUFMAN IS NOW ON HOME LEAVE AND, IN
HIS CASE, ACCEPTANCE MUST BE MADE TENTATIVE. REFTEL ALSO
NOMINATED ANTWERP CONGEN BOLSTER. WE TENTATIVELY CONFIRM
ATTENDANCE OF BOLSTER ALTHOUGH WE NOTE THAT BOLSTER IS
NOT DUE TO ARRIVE AT POST UNTIL 22 AUGUST. WE WILL
RECONFIRM AT THAT TIME.

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2) EMBASSY HAS FOLLOWING COMMENTS TO MAKE ON AGENDA FOR
MEETINGS:
A. REPORT ON RESULTS OF INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE TO
DEVELOP A NATIONAL EXPORT POLICY. MOST POSTS WHO WILL BE
SENDING REPRESENTATIVES TO THIS MEETING SUBMITTED LISTS
OF SUGGESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION BY INTER-AGENCY TASK
FORCE. WE BELIEVE THAT THESE SUGGESTIONS MERIT SOME

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION BY A GATHERING OF ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL OFFICERS. WE SUGGEST THAT DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS GIVE ATTENDEES BRIEFING ON THE RESULTS OF THE TASK FORCE STUDIES AND A READING ON THOSE ASPECTS OF THE STUDIES WHICH SEEM MOST LIKELY TO BE CARRIED OUT. MANY OF THE SUGGESTIONS WHICH HAD NOT BEEN PICKED UP OR OTHERWISE DEVELOPED COULD ALSO SERVE AS A BASIS FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION.

B. MODERNIZING COMMERCIAL EQUIPMENT. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE TO REVIEW POSSIBLE USAGE OF ADP EQUIPMENT IN COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS. THIS COULD INVOLVE ACQUISITION BY EMBASSIES OF SMALL COMPUTERS TO SHARE THEM WITH THE ADMINISTRATIVE, CONSULAR AND POLITICAL SECTIONS IN IMPROVING OPERATING EFFICIENCY. IN SAME CONTEXT WE WOULD APPRECIATE REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF A/EIS SYSTEM WHICH WE BELIEVE IS GREATLY NEEDED.

C. PROMOTION OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN THE U.S. WE NOTE THAT THE LATEST REFORMULATION ON INVESTMENT POLICY STATES THAT THE U.S. NEITHER PROMOTES NOR DISCOURAGES FOREIGN INVESTMENT. DURING THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS INTEREST IN INVESTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES HAS GROWN SUBSTANTIALLY IN WESTERN EUROPE. THE PRESENCE OF MANY STATE OFFICES WHICH ARE SET UP PRECISELY TO PROMOTE INVESTMENT RAISES SOME POLICY QUESTIONS AT INDIVIDUAL POSTS. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE A CLEAR EXPLANATION BEHIND THE REASONING FOR THE CURRENT US POLICY ON INVESTMENT. AT UNCLASSIFIED

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PRESENT THERE ARE POSTS WHICH ARE ACTIVELY AND ENERGETICALLY PUSHING FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN THE U.S. OTHERS ARE FOLLOWING A STRICT HANDS-OFF POLICY. ALLOWING FOR DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES AT POST AN EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO STANDARDIZE OUR APPROACH TO INVESTMENT.

D. THE ROLE OF THE COMMERCIAL OFFICER. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO REVIEW THE DEPARTMENT'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE ROLE OF THE COMMERCIAL OFFICER AT POST. RECENT STAFF CUT-BACKS IN THE EUR BUREAU HAVE INVOLVED THE LOSS OF A NUMBER OF COMMERCIAL POSITIONS. IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO LEARN WHAT PROPORTION OF THESE CUTS WERE COMMERCIAL AND WHAT PROPORTION WERE ADMINISTRATIVE, SECURITY, CONSULAR, ETC. EMBASSY BRUSSELS LOST TWO AMERICAN POSITIONS, ONE OF WHICH WAS THE ASSISTANT COMMERCIAL ATTACHE AND THE SECOND A SECRETARIAL POSITION, HALF OF WHICH WAS ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL. LOSS OF THESE POSITIONS AT THE SAME TIME THE SPECIAL TASK FORCE HAD BEEN SET UP TO EXAMINE WAYS OF IMPROVING OUR EXPORT PROMOTION APPEARED AT BEST INCONSISTENT. A REVIEW OF DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL POLICY IN THE COMMERCIAL AREA WOULD APPEAR DESIRABLE. CHAMBERS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978BRUSSE15653
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780332-1189
Format: TEL
From: BRUSSELS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780865/aaaacbur.tel
Line Count: 114
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: fc118663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION COME
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 202171
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1741390
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: WESTERN EUROPE ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL OFFICER CONFERENCES
TAGS: BEXP, BE
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/fc118663-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014